

## Memorandum

Date: September 18, 2002

To: California Bay-Delta Public Advisory Committee

From: Greg Gartrell and Marguerite Young, Co-Chairs  
Drinking Water Subcommittee

Subject: Subcommittee Recommendation – Action: Adopt the Subcommittee  
recommendation regarding State and Regional Board’s actions pursuant to SB390

### Summary

CALFED Agencies have adopted a general target of continuously improving Delta water quality for all uses. CALFED Agencies’ target for providing safe, reliable, and affordable drinking water in a cost-effective way, is to achieve either: (a) average concentrations at Delta drinking water intakes of 50 µg/L bromide and 3.0 mg/L total organic carbon, or (b) an equivalent level of public health protection (ELPHP) using a cost-effective combination of alternative source waters, source control and treatment technologies. Source water protection is one of the key tenets of the multi-pronged approach that CalFed has adopted for achieving water quality improvement.

From the Water Quality Program Plan:

*CALFED does not possess independent, regulatory authority over water quality. However, CALFED does recognize the need for participating agencies to exercise their responsibilities with regard to water quality. CALFED will work with all entities in support of achieving its water quality goals.*

*CALFED’s Water Quality Program calls for implementation of a range of tools by participating agencies and interested parties to accomplish its goals. These tools include, but are not limited to, voluntary efforts, use of economic incentives, and exercising regulatory authority by appropriate agencies. The appropriate mix of tools will vary, depending on the problem, existing activities, and where CALFED’s program can add value.*

The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (CVRWQCB) is still several years away from developing a comprehensive drinking water policy, as required by the CALFED Program Record of Decision. However, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and CVRWQCB are moving forward very soon on at least one initiative could afford a significant opportunity to improve drinking water quality. This fall, the SWRCB and CVRWQCB must act in accordance with the provisions of SB390, a 1999 law requiring waivers for non-point sources

---

### CALFED Agencies

#### California

The Resources Agency  
Department of Water Resources  
Department of Fish and Game  
The Reclamation Board  
Delta Protection Commission  
Department of Conservation  
San Francisco Bay Conservation  
and Development Commission

California Environmental Protection Agency  
State Water Resources Control Board  
Department of Health Services  
Department of Food and Agriculture

#### Federal

Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Reclamation  
Fish and Wildlife Service  
Geological Survey  
Bureau of Land Management  
Environmental Protection Agency  
Army Corps of Engineers

Department of Agriculture  
Natural Resources Conservation Service  
Forest Service  
Department of Commerce  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
Western Area Power Administration

to sunset at the end of 2002. The waivers cover a variety of activities that take place on lands in the Bay Delta Watershed including but not limited to agriculture and silviculture.

According to the most recent sanitary survey for the State Water Project, agricultural drainage and runoff contribute significant amounts of organic carbon, salts, pesticides, pathogens and other constituents to the waters of the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers. Silvicultural practices can increase sediments and carbon loads. All of these constituents degrade source water quality for drinking water beneficial uses (and other beneficial uses). Commendable efforts are underway in many sectors to improve water quality associated with non point sources. Rice growers in the Sacramento Valley have demonstrated how effective implementation of BMPs can be in successfully reducing loadings of rice herbicides. In urban areas, cities have shown that the toxicity of urban runoff can be lessened with best management practices developed in association with stormwater discharge permits. These examples are heartening; however, much more monitoring is needed to better understand, assess and manage the loads of these contaminants. Development of a more comprehensive suite of appropriate best management practices to prevent pollution and improve water quality is also needed. The Boards' pending action with regard to SB390 affords a significant opportunity for the state to make progress in both of these areas.

### **Background**

The subcommittee heard a presentation on the Central Valley Board's timeline for developing a drinking water quality policy at its July 23 meeting. At its August 24<sup>th</sup> meeting following a presentation on source improvement, the subcommittee developed the recommendation as a group. This final recommendation below was adopted by unanimously by the subcommittee at the September 18 meeting.

Under the MOU on the Drinking Water Quality Program (DWQP) Management, the "SWRCB/CVRWQCB and USEPA have primary responsibility for source water protection, including agricultural drainage management." Furthermore, the MOU state that "In consultation with DHS, SWRCB/CVRWQCB and USEPA will have primary responsibility for the development of ambient water quality objectives for drinking water contaminants and their precursors." It is appropriate, therefore, that the SWRCB and CVRWQCB, as part of their actions related to SB390 coordinate those actions with the CALFED Program objectives, including the DWQP. The recommendation is that actions related to the implementation of SB390 incorporate two aspects of the CALFED DWQP: monitoring and assessment for constituents of concern for drinking water quality and development, implementation and assessment of BMPs for reducing impacts of discharges that currently have waivers from regulation.

### **Requested Action**

The Drinking Water Subcommittee of the Bay Delta Public Advisory Committee requests that the Bay Delta Public Advisory Committee urge the State Water Resources Control Board and the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board, as member agencies of the CALFED Program, incorporate drinking water quality parameters of concern into its actions pursuant to SB390. In doing so, we encourage the Boards to consider the following activities for inclusion:

1. Monitoring and assessment for constituents of concern for drinking water quality centrally coordinated and maintained among various programs collecting data.
2. Development, implementation and assessment of Best management practices to reduce loadings of drinking water constituents of concern, with and emphasis on addressing the root causes of impairments.

The Drinking Water Subcommittee would appreciate the opportunity to assist the SWRCB and the CVRWQCB and the regulated community in developing the necessary monitoring, assessment and BMPs in carrying out this recommendation. These approaches should to the maximum extent practical be consistent with CALFED's emphasis on encouraging regional partnerships and avoiding redirected impacts.

.

---

#### CALFED Agencies

##### California

The Resources Agency  
Department of Water Resources  
Department of Fish and Game  
The Reclamation Board  
Delta Protection Commission  
Department of Conservation  
San Francisco Bay Conservation  
and Development Commission

California Environmental Protection Agency  
State Water Resources Control Board  
Department of Health Services  
Department of Food and Agriculture

##### Federal

Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Reclamation  
Fish and Wildlife Service  
Geological Survey  
Bureau of Land Management  
Environmental Protection Agency  
Army Corps of Engineers

Department of Agriculture  
Natural Resources Conservation Service  
Forest Service  
Department of Commerce  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
Western Area Power Administration